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1962/08/23

8. McCone, "Memorandum of Meeting with the President,"
23 August 1962

*Third
Warning on Missiles
in Cuba*

~~SECRET EYES ONLY~~

0-#36

23 August 1962

Memorandum of Meeting with the President

Attended by Secretaries Rusk, McNamara, Gilpatric, General Taylor,
Mr. Bundy, McCone

Subject: Cuba

1. McCone advised that President had been briefed on the Cuban situation but added the information given [REDACTED]

Rusk advocated informing Canadians and all NATO allies of growing seriousness of situation; ^{and} also advocated removal of restrictions on use of Guantanamo by the Lansdale group.

ACTION: This point not cleared and should be pursued as strongly opposed by Chiefs.

2. The President requested a continuing analysis of the number and type of Soviet and Oriental personnel imported into Cuba; quantity and type of equipment and its probable use; all construction - particularly anxious to know whether construction involved SAM sites might differ from the ground sites. McCone stated we probably could not differentiate between surface-to-air and 350 mile ground-to-ground offensive missile. McNamara observed portable ground missiles could not be located under any circumstances.

ACTION: DDCI should have Board of National Estimates working continuously on this analysis.

~~SECRET EYES ONLY~~

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3. President requested analysis of the danger to the United States and the effect on Latin America of missile installations.

ACTION: DDCI should arrange for preparation of such estimates.

4. President raised the question of whether we should make a statement in advance of our position, should the Soviets install missiles and the alternative actions open to us in such event. In the course of the discussion, apparent many in the room related action in Cuba to Soviet actions in Turkey, Greece, Berlin, Far East and elsewhere. McCone questioned value of Jupiter missiles in Turkey and Italy. McNamara agreed they were useless but difficult politically to remove them.

5. ACTION: He agreed to study this possibility.

President raised question of what we could do against Soviet missile sites in Cuba. Could we take them out by air or would a ground offensive be necessary or alternatively could they be destroyed by a substantial guerrilla effort.

6. President raised question of what we should do in Cuba if Soviets precipitated a Berlin crisis. This is the alternative to the proposition of what Soviets would do in Berlin if we moved in Cuba.

7. During the conversation I raised substance of my plan of action as outlined in the attached paper. There was no disagreement that we must solve the ~~Berlin~~ ^{Cuba} problem. However, we should not start the political action and propaganda effort now until we had decided on the policy of following through to the complete solution of the Cuban problem.

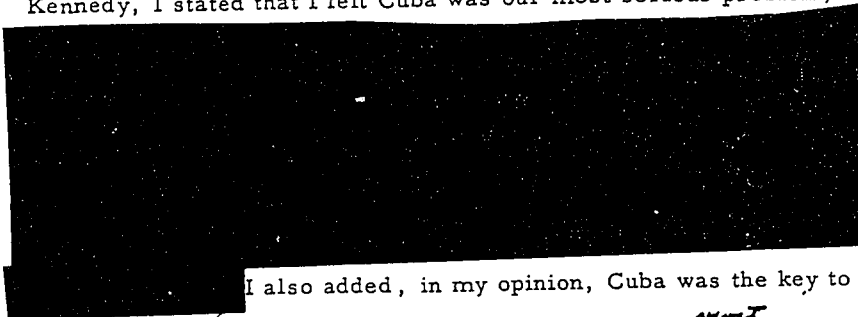
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~~SECRET~~

8. (Continued)

~~SECRET~~ ~~EYES ONLY~~

8. After the meeting in a private conversation with Robert Kennedy, I stated that I felt Cuba was our most serious problem;



I also added, in my opinion, Cuba was the key to all of Latin America; if Cuba succeeds, we can expect ^{most} all of Latin America to fall.

John A. McCone
Director

JAM:ji

Attachment: Aug 21, 62 paper - Memorandum, Proposed plan of action for Cuba in the light of:

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~~SECRET~~ ~~EYES ONLY~~